

Dear Colleagues,

Attached to this email is a *draft version* of the charge to our working group for preparation of a Handbook on evidence based toxicology for public health. We hope that this will provide a road map for our next meeting at the Cochrane Collaboration in Vienna this year. As you are no doubt aware, there is increasing interest in and requirement for incorporated systematic methods in evaluating information from toxicology in decision making by environmental, food safety, and other regulatory agencies as well as the WHO.

This draft incorporates the discussions held at the 22nd Cochrane Colloquium in India, in which you participated in person and by phone. Note that its scope is limited to nonhuman toxicology, as there are other groups within Cochrane that are working on observational epidemiology. Our group is the only focus for working on non-human testing as a source of information about harms. In addition to highly relevant programs in animal toxicology, we have also referenced important documents and ongoing work in this area by the National Toxicology Program of the US National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the Navigation Project of the Center for Reproductive health at the University of California San Francisco. The *draft* has been reviewed by colleagues in the US Cochrane Center and the Cochrane Collaboration, who have also guided us in developing the next steps for our work.

Now, we rely upon your assistance to accomplish the following

- Review and revise this document as appropriate; ensure that its scope is appropriately and clearly defined
- Propose yourself as an initial leader for a topic in this document
 - As a leader, you will identify others [not limited to the original working group] to assist you in preparing a work plan and ensuring open participation of experts and stakeholders in the work described
 - You will reach out to existing Cochrane groups as appropriate to incorporate existing guidance and to ensure consistency within Cochrane methods documents
 - You will lead the discussion of your topic at the next Cochrane Colloquium

We will continue to manage the evidence based toxicology methods group through Johns Hopkins University and the US Cochrane Center unless and until another group proposes to take on this task.